

Event Features Panel Discussion, Legislative Update

Los Lunas, NM – On Monday, September 13th, Harry Teague will host a **Katie's Law Summit in Albuquerque**

featuring representatives from the law enforcement, legal and victims' and survivors' rights communities. The event will include a legislative update from Teague on the progress of his federal version of Katie's Law through Congress, as well as panel discussions on the benefits of DNA fingerprinting and the impact it can play in keeping communities safe.

The Katie Sepich Enhanced DNA Collection Act, passed by the House of Representatives in May, is a bipartisan bill that encourages states to maximize the potential of forensic DNA to solve and prevent violent crimes by collecting a DNA sample upon arrest at the same time as fingerprints -- for certain felony crimes.

The Summit is comprised of three panel discussions on addressing post-arrestee DNA collection laws from the perspective of the law enforcement, legal, and victims' and survivor's perspectives. The discussions, which will also include a question and answer segment, will also discuss the importance of enacting Katie's Law, a New Mexico law that has been adopted by 23 other states, nationwide. Confirmed speakers include Jayann Sepich, mother of Katie Sepich and champion of DNA fingerprinting, Former Assistant Attorney General Steven Suttle, Las Cruces Deputy Chief of Police Chris Miller, Valencia County Sheriff Rene Rivera, and Amanda Foor, rape survivor and an affiliate of the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), as well as a video message from John Walsh, host of America's Most Wanted.

□

The Katie's Law Summit is open to interested media, press availability immediately following.

Harry Teague, a strong supporter of the use of forensic DNA in violent crime cases, introduced the Katie Sepich Enhanced DNA Collection Act (H.R. 4614), is named after Katie Sepich, from Carlsbad, New Mexico, who was 22 years old when she was brutally raped and murdered. DNA under Katie's fingernails helped the police develop a DNA profile for her killer and this profile was included in the national database where all DNA samples are kept. Three years later in 2006, the New Mexico DNA database finally matched the unknown profile to Gabriel Avilla who had been arrested for several other crimes, including a felony burglary in November 2003. Katie's Law was not enacted in New Mexico until January of 2007. If New Mexico had required a DNA sample for Avilla's felony arrest in November 2003, investigators might have solved Katie's murder sooner and caught Avilla before he was left free to roam the streets for three years. Harry Teague worked with Katie's parents, Jayann and David Sepich of Carlsbad to take this New Mexico law to the federal level, where it passed the US House of Representatives and awaits consideration in the Senate.

□

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH:

WHAT: Katie's Law Summit hosted by Harry Teague

WHERE: New Mexico Bar Association, 5121 Masthead NE, Albuquerque

WHEN: 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

□

Confirmed speakers:

□

Special Video Message from John Walsh, host of America's Most Wanted and DNA Fingerprinting Advocate

Jayann Sepich, DNA Fingerprinting Advocate and Mother of Katie Sepich

Caraline Sepich, DNA Fingerprinting Advocate and Sister of Katie Sepich

Steven Suttle, Former Assistant Attorney General

New Mexico District Attorney's Association, District Attorney Angela Pacheco

John Krebsbach, Forensic Scientist, New Mexico DNA Identification System

Sheriff Rene Rivera, Sheriff of Valencia County

Deputy Chief Chris Miller, Deputy Chief of Police of Las Cruces

Amanda Foor, Rape Survivor and RAINN Speakers' Bureau Member

###